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Sen. Hardiman's child-safety bill passed out of the Senate

LANSING – Legislation proposed by Sen. Bill Hardiman R-Kentwood, that would keep felons and dangerous individuals away from children won Senate approval today. His bill came as part of a package of bills introduced by House and Senate Republicans.

As part of the GOP legislation, Hardiman proposed Senate Bill 615, which would require the Michigan Department of Human Services to do fingerprint-based background checks on all daycare center licensees and require daycare centers to do background checks on all paid employees. Hardiman's legislation would also prohibit daycare centers from employing convicted sex offenders.

"Parents should have the utmost confidence in the safety of our state's schools and daycare centers," Hardiman said. "I want all parents to have peace of mind knowing that convicted sex offenders aren't among the people we entrust to care for and educate our children."

On June 21, 2005, Senator Hardiman held a Family and Human Services Committee meeting where the Auditor General's office provided information that the current statute does not require the Department to perform criminal history background checks on individuals in child care organizations, including licensees, administrators, directors, and other adult household members residing in day care homes or on employees or on volunteers that have contact with a child. Senator Hardiman's SB 615 would require background checks by law.

SB 615 has been referred to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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